



Carson City Health and Human Services NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Carson City Health and Human Services Announces First Human Case of West Nile Virus in 2006

Carson City, NV – Carson City Health and Human Services is reporting one (1) human case associated with West Nile Virus (WNV). The individual is under the age 50 and they are a Carson City resident.

The Carson City individual has the less severe form of the disease, West Nile fever.

Mosquitoes are WNV carriers that become infected when they feed on infected birds. Infected mosquitoes can then spread WNV to humans and other animals when they bite. West Nile Virus is **NOT** spread through casual contact such as touching or kissing a person infected with the virus.

Personal protection becomes very important with the arrival of the virus and citizens are urged to “Fight the Bite” with some simple measures. Insure that window screens are in good repair, avoid activities as much as possible at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are active, and wear long sleeves and pants as protections. The use of mosquito repellent is encouraged. Most repellents contain DEET, and if used according to the label directions, is safe and effective. Other alternative repellent products are also available, allowing the individual a choice of methods that can afford protection to family members.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), most people infected with WNV will not have any type of illness or symptoms. It is estimated that 20 percent of the people who become infected will develop West Nile fever. Symptoms include fever, headache, tiredness and body aches.

Approximately one in 150 persons (less than one percent) infected with WNV will develop a more severe form of the disease, West Nile encephalitis or meningitis. Symptoms of the more severe disease include severe headache, high fever, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness and paralysis.

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While there is no specific treatment for WNV infection, people who have been exposed to mosquitoes and experience symptoms of the more severe illness are encouraged to contact their health care provider immediately.

Dr. Michael Poulos, Nevada State Veterinarian, continues to urge owners of horses, donkeys and mules to get their animals vaccinated. “While there isn’t a vaccine for humans, there is a vaccine available for horses, donkeys and mules. If you haven’t vaccinated your equines, you need to vaccinate them now.”

For more information about West Nile Virus, please access the following websites:

<http://health2k.state.nv.us>

<http://agri.state.nv.us>

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